



**USRowing**

**Minutes of  
The US Rowing Association  
Referee Commission Meeting**

**December 2 to 4, 2004  
Miami, FL**

In attendance: Robert Appleyard, Bill Collins, Roxanne Everetts, Rachel Le Mieux, Tom Lotz, Tom Mannle, Bruce Soden (partial), Larry Tolle (partial) John Walker

Also in attendance (partial): Leah Penick, Laura Kunkemuller, Joseph Carlson, Robert Walton, Kirsten Meissner, Ron Chen, Don Langford, Robert Cummins, Robert Weiss, Tom Fuller, Polly Cooper, Thomas Cooper, TR Hernacki, Pat Ferguson, Gary Caldwell

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Appleyard (2:01 PM)
2. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**
  - a. **Prioritize critical decisions and business**
  - b. **Prioritize the necessary outcomes for this meeting**

**MOTION** (Le Mieux / Walker) Approve the agenda with noted additions. **MOTION PASSES** (6-Y; 0-N)
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM March 2004:**

Minutes approved previously and published, per IOP procedures (Approved, 6-0)
4. **COMMISSION ACTIONS SINCE July 2004 MEETING:**
  - a. **Rules proposals submitted to the October Board meeting**

Appleyard reviewed the status of rules proposals to the Board; he expected the Board to approve those items pending and that the full set of changes would be included in the 2005 version of the Rules
5. **TREASURER'S REPORT**
  - a. **Closure of 2004 budget**

Collins reported that the 2004 budget might exceed the original \$12000 budget, but that USRowing had increased the budget by \$3000, and that the actuals will be less than the revised total of \$15000
  - b. **Approval of allocations for 2005 budget**

Collins presented the budget for 2005; the originally proposed budget of \$29750 will be reduced to \$20000

Collins discussed how to reduce the proposed budget to the authorized level and indicated Training Materials and Regional Budgets as the categories where the bulk of the reductions could be taken, other categories being not particularly discretionary

Collins asked about the costs of reprinting the Referee Training manual; Everetts indicated \$1800 as of a year ago

Several members asked about distributing the manual on CD; Everetts indicated that hardcopy provides the best value to candidates [it was noted that the Manual needs to be re-edited before being redistributed].

Appleyard suggested not funding developmental/recruiting videos for 2005, reducing the Training Materials category to \$2500

Appleyard suggested reducing the allocation for the Referee College to \$2000, and eliminating the Clipboard, saving an additional \$1500

Everetts suggested distributing the Clipboard electronically, saving the printing costs, rather than eliminating the publication.

Appleyard suggested reducing regional budgets to \$750, totaling \$4500, and reducing administration to \$750.

Discussion ensued about the uses of the regional budget, reprinting costs for training materials, development of new training materials, Referee College Costs, buying items for new referees, and being able to carry over unspent allocations from 2004.

Final suggestions included allocating \$6000 as total regional budget, and reducing meeting travel by \$750, resulting in a total revised budget of \$20,000

**MOTION** (Walker / Lotz) Accept the revised Budget of \$20,000. **MOTION PASSES** (7-Y; 0-N)

Le Mieux raised the issue of on what the regions should be able to spend their budgets.

Carlson and Penick commented that there has to be a level of equity across regions for support to referees.

Appleyard suggested not including purchase of items for new referees as acceptable uses of regional funds.

Regional representatives to submit revised requests to Collins by Saturday, December 4, 2004.

Mechanisms to fund expenses for recruitment, training and certification of officials.

Collins discussed the "Referee Stipend" fund, which is the "pin" account begun by Joan Zandbergen. The fund has now been deposited with the Referee Commission USRowing funds and will be maintained as a separate line item.

Contributions to the fund are now tax-deductible

A discussion ensued about a source of supply for the pins, using the fund to purchase new pins; Some discussion ensued about whether to use the pins as a fund-raising device

Le Mieux inquired about the possibility of college athletic conferences providing support to USRowing and the Commission for training and development of referees; Appleyard indicated that he had heard the same thing, but that nothing concrete had materialized.

**MOTION** (Mannle / Le Mieux) Authorize Collins to use monies from the fund to purchase and replenish a new supply of referee pins. **MOTION PASSES** (7-Y; 0-N)

## 6. Subcommittee Reports

### a. Grievance /Appeals subcommittee

1.) Subcommittee report (Soden)

Soden owes the procedures for revised grievance and appeals to be included in the IOP

Soden to provide the revised materials to Appleyard by December 31, 2004

### b. Ethics and Performance Subcommittee

1.) Subcommittee Report (Appleyard)

Appointment of Mannle as Chair (Appleyard)

Appleyard noted that he had appointed Mannle as chair, but hadn't communicated this to the members; Tolle had also been interested in the post

Mannle indicated that the task at hand is to talk to other interested parties, including Jay Jacobus and Tolle, and develop procedures for dealing with ethics and performance issues associated with referees

Mannle to provide a report on procedures on or before the meeting in March, 2005

### c. Education, Publications and Recognition Subcommittee

1.) Subcommittee Report (Everetts)

2.) Preparation of Level II clinic material for 2005 (body of the race)

Everetts indicated that she had sent the materials available to Appleyard.

At present there is no approved material on the body of the race

There are at least three presentations that could be approved, or synthesized for approval

**MOTION** (Appleyard / Soden) Restrict the use of the USRowing/Referee Commission logo to clinic materials that had been officially approved by the Commission. **MOTION PASSES** (9-Y; 0-N)

Everetts to synthesize materials from the existing presentations and send to the Commission for approval, so that the material can be available for use at the clinician's teleconference in January, 2005

### 3.) Clinician Teleconference

Everetts reported on the clinician teleconference held on November 18, 2004. The call went smoothly and as useful as a method of conversation and discussion among clinicians.

The consensus seemed to be that the medium of a teleconference could be valuable to obtain a common understanding of clinic topics for the year

Carlson noted the importance of making sure the time involved was structured and purposive; Kunkemuller observed the necessity of not allowing one person to dominate the conversation

The next teleconference is tentatively scheduled for January 13, 2005; notifications will be sent that are more highlighted than previously

4.) Referee newsletter – publication schedule for 2005; key personnel

Next newsletter will be published electronically, and focus on emergency situations, management and procedures.

5.) Referee recognition awards

Appreciation letters and recognition awards are in process.

### d. Rules and Safety Subcommittee

1.) Subcommittee report (Collins)

Collins indicated that he was looking for 3-5 people to fill out the committee, and asked members to forward any interested parties to him

Collins reported on a device or set of devices designed to stabilize a shell, especially but not limited to novice crews

The device per se does not violate the Rules, but specific conferences may have objections

Walker cited Rule 3-101, allowing (and encouraging by some interpretations) unlimited freedom in the design and construction of equipment

2.) Tabled discussions on rules

a. Rule 2-606(a) Proposal to increase the protest fee (Lotz – July)

Collins recommended to take this item off the table, with no action. Soden disagreed, and recommended increasing the protest fee to \$75. Kunkemuller observed that the problem is inconsistent application of the Rules, rather than protest procedures.

b. Rule 2-410 (outside assistance): Le Mieux/Collins. No discussion

3.) Grant request for safety equipment used by referees (Le Mieux)

Discussed under referee support and finances

4.) Call for new business items

Le Mieux raised her continuing communications from constituents regarding the use of GPS in boats during competitive situations.

Appleyard reiterated the Commission position that the use of GPS is a violation of Rule 3-106 (Electronic Devices); parties interested in using a GPS during certain types of races (expedition, long head races) could apply for an exception as part the registration process; the Rule is not asterisked.

**e. Recruiting, Testing and Training subcommittee**

1.) Subcommittee Report (Walker)

Updated requirements for Assistant Referee and Referee to reflect prior decision to remove mandatory advancement

Walker reported on updated language for inclusion in the IOP

Several members expressed confusion over the language in the proposal; especially but not limited to suggested requirements for the Commission to certify work experience, having 3 Referees certify that someone is ready to advance, and review of experience based on the annual data call

The purpose of the document was to codify the already approved modifications to the process to allow Assistants to stay at that rank; but several members viewed this as also changing the process for becoming a (plenary) Referee

Members agreed that the issues involved are complicated, and that clarifications to the proposed language and the relationship of the language to the Commission's purposes and objects were needed before approval

Walker to provide a copy of the proposal electronically; members to provide

comments/revised language to Walker by December 31, 2004

2.) Submission of Assistant Referee exam for use in 2005

The new Assistant exam is available and is being used (revision 3, June 2004).

The exam was contained on the CD issued to clinicians.

3.) Submission of Referee evaluation and examination procedures for use in 2005.

Tolle commented that he did not think a written exam for Referee was necessary

Appleyard stated that he thought decisions to advance were not based primarily on the written exam, but on practical, and that the written exam is not as useful.

**MOTION** (Collins / LeMieux) Revise the written portion of the Referee exam. **MOTION PASSES** (6-Y; 2-N; 1-A)

Le Mieux called for a straw vote on retaining the written portion of the Referee exam, Soden seconded. Approved 5-1-3

Kirsten Meissner was assigned to begin working on an exam revision; Mannle to assist

4.) Regatta-days and FISA requirements

Le Mieux reported on her informal conversations with FISA Umpires about the use of regatta-days in tabulating experience for advance to FISA Umpire status

The results seemed to be that FISA is less concerned with the accounting unit of measure than with demonstrating competence and experience, and an ability to commit the time to the sport.

Walker to develop language for expressing license maintenance requirements in terms of regatta days; Mannle, Lotz, and Le Mieux to assist

**7. Commission Liaison Reports**

**a. Insurance and Liability (Appleyard)**

Appleyard noted the continuing valuable work of Lloyd McDonald on insurance and liability issues McDonald has requested NASO, on behalf of USRowing, to amend their policy to remove the exclusions about working in motorized launches

Tolle commented that there were other issues beyond the motorized launches, (e.g., no coverage for rowing, participant definition) that made NASO inadvisable

Until such time as the policy has been amended to the satisfaction of the Commission, NASO should

not be considered as an insurance resource for referees

Appleyard to prepare another Clipboard article on insurance and liability for the next issue

**b. Registered regatta task force (Appleyard)**

Appleyard reported that a proposal is being submitted to the Board to establish separate classifications for different types of registered regattas. This proposal identifies the participation of referees in the registered regatta structure.

Appleyard is a member of the task force; there was a proposal for the Board to vote on in October.

Two categories of regattas: Registered and Collegiate/Scholastic.

The Board approved the Registered Regatta program as proposed, with the exception of changes to the Rules regarding composition of the Jury and rights of appeal.

Appleyard further commented on the “sanctioning fee” being charged by USRowing under the program, and the potential for misunderstanding that the fee guarantees participation by officials at the regatta in question.

**c. Masters (Tolle)**

Tolle reported that the Masters Committee had two conference calls, and that the Committee is losing the assistance of Margot Zalkind.

Regional masters regattas are being discussed, with the potential for establishing “seeding” and qualification for Nationals; no current agreement on qualification standards for Masters Nationals.

Also being discussed are ways to get more benefit out of learn to row masters programs; the community loses rowers because of the costs of masters rowing events.

Collins asked about MRA; Tolle reported that Rowing News took the Committee to task “trashing” the Masters Nationals; the Committee is writing a rebuttal.

**d. Junior – youth (Le Mieux)**

Le Mieux reported that the junior and youth committees have not responded to her inquiry asking if there were any issues they would like to discuss with us.

**e. HPC – Trials (Appleyard)**

No report.

**f. Safety (Le Mieux)**

Appleyard indicated that he had been informed that he had been appointed to the safety committee; he demurred in favor of Le Mieux.

Le Mieux reported that the Safety Committee has met by teleconference, and that the current portfolio of safety-related material is being reviewed for relevance.

USRowing is applying for a \$50K grant from USCG to update their safety education materials, including hosting the information on the web site

**g. Adaptive rowing (Walker)**

No report.

**8. Commission Operations and Governance**

**a. At-large Representative Election**

Appleyard explained the procedures for electing the at-large representative

There was discussion and review of each of the candidates and their qualifications

Appleyard called the vote:

First ballot results:

Everetts 2

Meissner 1

Wylder 5

Abstention 1

Wylder elected

**b. Proposal for revising the subcommittee structure (Mannle)**

Le Mieux indicated that the proposal represents a more succinct structure, balances the workload, and is in support of the proposal

Everetts indicated that perhaps consideration might be given to re-instating the Nominations committee, which had been eliminated in March 2004. The nominations for awards, chief referees, etc., has fallen to the Chair

Appleyard indicated his support for the proposal, without any unfavorable comment on the way operations have been conducted in the past.

Collins indicated the committee descriptions should be re-written for the IOP

**MOTION** (Le Mieux / Walker) Accept proposal contained in Mannle memo of June 2004. **MOTION PASSES** (7-Y; 0-N)

**c. IOP Updates**

Appleyard suggested collecting proposed changes/modifications to the IOP since March, including actions taken at this (December) meeting, and incorporate them into an IOP update by the end of December

**d. Date and location for 2005 Commission meetings (spring and summer)**

Initial discussion determined that the meeting should be held in early March in a West Coast location

Recognizing that a Southern California location would save two airfares, discussion centered around the potential use of the Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista.

Lotz asked about the perception of a closed meeting if the meeting is held at Chula Vista; Appleyard indicated that access was not a problem for observers to the Referee College

Mannle asked about the possibility of having some of the March meeting either Friday night or Sunday morning, so as not to have a marathon session on Saturday. Members agreed to arrange travel so as to have some of the meeting on Friday evening.

**MOTION** (?? / ??) Approve meeting on the first weekend in March 2005 at Chula Vista USOC (first choice) or Seattle (second choice). **MOTION PASSES** (?-Y; ?-N)

The Commission approved meeting on the first weekend in March, 2005 with the Chula Vista location as the first choice, Seattle as the second

Appleyard to inquire about the availability of the Chula Vista OTC

## 9. Regattas and Events

### a. USRowing Nationals (Tolle)

Tolle reported that the USRowing Nationals were a "super" regatta, with a very good representation of referees from around the country.

Local referee participation was good, no trouble filling the slots.

Advertising rule enforcement affected the effective deployment of referee resources.

Social activities were well attended.

Tolle thought sending two referees down with every race was inefficient.

The salmonella incident was upsetting.

Major weakness was not having enough staff available to do weigh-ins appropriately, this was due to staffing required to enforce advertising.

### b. Masters Nationals (Lotz)

Lotz reported on the Masters nationals; he asked that the liaison function be formally presented to the Chief Referee by the Commission in the form of a letter.

Lotz reported on problems caused by the lack of clear lines of authority and responsibility for replacing referees who are selected to attend, but are unable to attend.

Lotz presented several other recommendations for improving the regatta, and suggested that the Masters Committee should be encouraged to have a larger presence as volunteers for referee and regatta-support functions.

Appleyard asked about feedback from the competitors about the procedures used at the regatta; Tolle indicated that the feedback was satisfactory.

Appleyard inquired about the issue of waking by referees, which had been a subject of concern previously. Carlson reported that following the prescribed rotation procedures (putting back to the start) would have produced no wake, but that referees didn't always follow the procedures.

### c. Julian Wolf National Referee Training School

Appleyard reported on the 2004 Julian Wolf National Referee Training School, which was the Clinicians College; he had had reservations about holding it, but reported that the College went well and exceeded all expectations.

Approval for the 2005 basic referee college

Appleyard is making reservations for the 2005 Basic Referee College, and invited input from the members and others for the curriculum and content of this course.

New Business and Proposals

Some discussion ensued about the portability of the College, so that it could be held at other (potentially East coast) locations

Everetts introduced the issue of establishing an endowment for the College. Members agreed that this idea should be investigated.

### d. Reports or incidents from other events

No report

## 10. Referee Support and Finances

### a. Ad hoc committee report on financial burdens affecting recruitment of new officials (Le Mieux)

Le Mieux reported on her investigations into financial burdens for new referees

The effect of the burden is not on recruitment, but on retention; the costs of the equipment, whether initial issue or subsequent procurement, are causing some concern

One of the ideas is to provide a welcome kit for new referees; another is to fund "regatta boxes" so that commonly used equipment could be obtained for sharing and use by all.

Appleyard observed a differentiation between mandatory and desirable/comfort items of equipment; he can support providing subsidy for

mandatory, required items; Tolle agreed with Appleyard's observations

Le Mieux noted the mandatory items listed in the Referee Training Manual as primary items for any support; Mannle noted the importance of adding a PFD to this list

Soden asked about referees dropping out because of financial concerns; travel and associated expenses seem to be more important factors than equipment costs

Appleyard observed that the report should be based on the premise that any support should be provided on a nationwide basis, rather than differing approaches regionally

Tolle observed that referees may not have to do everything (all the jobs) and that reducing the scope of jobs required might reduce equipment costs

Appleyard discussed travel expenses and other associated costs, and that the funds to support some of these expenses might come from different sources

Le Mieux indicated the importance and potential value of the information on un-reimbursed expenses to be obtained via the annual data call

Le Mieux to provide a written report to members for discussion at the meeting in March, 2005, with the potential to approve a concept for support in the summer

**b. Motion to reduce USRowing membership dues for non-competing referees (Collins)**

Appleyard forwarded the proposal to the Board, and has received no response to date; he does not think that the Board has reached a consensus on the issue, one way or the other.

**11. Old Business**

**Annual Data Call (Everetts)**

Everetts indicated that a web front end data entry form would be available for submitting information to the annual data call.

For those individuals who do not have access, or are web-UNcomfortable, regular mail would be used.

Kirsten Meisner and Scott Flory are developing the web-based interface and uploading the data into the data base. Plans are to make the web-site available NLT January 15, 2005

Commission members to be the beta testers for the data call.

Appleyard inquired whether a hard copy notice would still be necessary; general consensus was no, but that regional reps could send out additional notifications/reminders

Appleyard stated that the Commission members have differing opinions about how the data and database should be managed and used; if in the design process for the new data call the regional reps could have better management tools to see how has responded and with what, then this would be beneficial

Everetts indicated that the data base would be on-line and accessible to members of the Commission in the 1st quarter of 2005

Lotz asked about the mechanism to address referee non-performance based on the data in the data call, or non-response to the data call; Appleyard indicated that this would be taken up in executive session.

**a. Proposal for revising the annual evaluation and ranking of referees (Mannle)**

Withdrawn by Mannle

**b. Granting NSR Designation to Head Races (Lotz)**

Appleyard reviewed the history of the issue of having head races identified as NSR head races

Lotz and Walker indicated that guidance, criteria or standards need to be identified for head races to qualify as NSRs

**MOTION** (Le Mieux / Walker) Approve the Commission designating head races with NSR status.  
**MOTION PASSES** (7-Y; 0-N)

**12. Executive Session**

The Commission met in Executive Session. The issues discussed and decisions made are summarized below:

- a. Procedures are being developed to deal more effectively with referees who have not complied with the procedural requirements for maintenance of license (membership in USRowing, clinic attendance, response to data call) , and to be able to take appropriate action.
- b. The Commission discussed individual personnel issues by region.
- c. The Commission unanimously approved the advancement of Julian Wolf to Emeritus status.
- d. The Commission approved the appointment of new clinicians as follows:
  - 1) MA: Lloyd MacDonald
  - 2) SE: Ray Duff (upon arrival), Tom Cooper, Jim Hotop
  - 3) NW: Warren Polensky
- e. The Commission approved the appointment of regional evaluators for purposes of jury selection

at USRowing national championship regattas, as follows:

- 1) NE & MA: all clinicians
  - 2) MW: all clinicians
  - 3) SE: Lotz, P. Cooper, P. Wilson
  - 4) NW: LeMieux, Fuller, Willenbring
  - 5) SW: Walker, Shawl, Jacobus, Scurria Collins
- f. The Commission made the following assignments:
- 1) USRowing National Championships
    - i. Chief Referee: Ray Duff
    - ii. Deputy: Laura Kunkemuller
  - 2) USRowing Masters National Championships
    - i. Chief Referee: John Quinn
    - ii. Deputy: Joe Carlson
- g. The Commission unanimously approved increasing the number of invited referees at USRowing national championship regattas to 4 per region, for a total of 26 (including the Chief and Deputy).
- h. The Commission approved the nomination of Scott Woodworth to take the FISA Umpire Examination

### 13. Open Session

The Commission opened the floor to the visitors to the meeting for open discussion on any topics desired. The issues discussed are summarized below:

- Pros and cons of expecting referees to have tools, equipment, tape, etc. available on the water to assist crews.
- Prospects for a system of “tags” for checking boats by Control Commission.
- Appreciation was expressed for Everetts for all her work on the Commission.
- There was an extensive discussion about referee expenses, and the costs and incentives for being a referee. Estimated out of pocket expenses incurred by the referee corps are approximately \$500K, representing a huge service to the sport, and a significant proportion of the total USRowing budget of \$3.5M. The potential for obtaining referee funding independent of USRowing was raised. A comment was made that all amateur sports, especially those that are growing, are going through a transition, and the effects of the economy on sponsorship affect that transition. A regatta director noted that in the past his events

have benefited from using USRowing officials, but that if referees needed to be paid, on top of what USRowing was charging for sanctioning, the events could not take place. There was some sentiment expressed to have reasonable expenses taken care of by LOCs, rather than there be an implication that the corps become “professional referees.” If that were to become the case, local organizations might begin to develop separate referee groups from their ranks. The Commission noted that it and the Board are aware of these issues, there is a “white paper” on the topic in development, and that the opportunity to make some progress on the issues involved was good, especially concerning more resources for referee training and development. A completely new model for the latter is being discussed by the Board.

- Other issues:
  - All in a position of responsibility should be aware of potential rifts among the referees over the issue of finances and expenses and to do their best to try to minimize them.
  - Referees should set a good example by wearing their PFDs
  - The appearance of or separateness exclusivity on the part of referees, including the lack of coordination on schedules between referees and coaches at the Convention.
  - Are there ways to be flexible, and modify the procedures for becoming an official, so that the Assistant exam could be taken before all the observations are completed?

### 14. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at December 4, at 4:50 PM.